

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOHN SULLIVAN**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2007*

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to state for the record that I missed rollcall vote 533 to H.R. 2764 taken on June 21, 2007. Had I been present for this vote, I would have voted "nay."

As an ardent supporter of the rights of the unborn, I am strongly opposed to H. Amdt. 367, which would allow international non-governmental organizations—NGOs—who do not comply with the Mexico City Policy to receive family planning assistance from the United States.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 28, 2007*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2829) making appropriations for financial services and general government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes:

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I represent a minority-majority district with a large Spanish-speaking population. These constituents work and pay taxes just like every Member of Congress. And, even if they are undocumented and work, they still pay taxes.

The IRS National Taxpayer Advocate has found that 6 percent of taxpayers do not speak English at home. For many of my hard-working constituents, having tax material in their native tongue greatly simplifies their ability to comply with the requirements of the IRS. This is the essence of good government and good citizenship. Isn't that what we want to encourage?

I commend the chairman for his foresightedness in directing the IRS to expand the availability of Internal Revenue Service forms and information in Spanish, the second most common language spoken at home by 28 million people. Let's face it—our very complex tax code takes an accountant to figure out. We could all use a little help.

Please oppose the Stearns amendment.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION

**HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2007*

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, next weekend Grand Junction is celebrating its 125th birthday. U.S. Rep. JOHN SALAZAR (CO-3) made the following statement:

"On Grand Junction's 125th birthday, I would like to express my appreciation of this unique and vibrant city and all its citizens.

"Since 'Governor' Crawford founded Grand Junction in the 1880's, the city's history has been remarkable. Though located in the arid Grand Valley, an innovative system of canals and water transfers were built in the late 19th century that allowed Grand Junction's farmers to begin growing fruit, and today Grand Junction is the 'wine country' of the state. As a farmer, I appreciate the importance of teaching younger generations the significance of agriculture and the tremendous value it imparts to a community.

"Grand Junction is also a national leader in all industries and fields. The Preferential Voting System was developed and first used in Grand Junction. Grand Junction citizens helped develop the New Deal, worked on the Manhattan Project and served in Congress.

"The area is also blessed with a variety of natural resources, including uranium and oil shale. In the 1980's the shale-dependent economy crashed after the withdrawal of Exxon Mobile, but with its typical determination, Grand Junction is now a thriving economic power. In 2000 this city was named the 12th strongest economy in the country, a tribute to the resiliency and strength of the citizens of the Grand Valley.

"On the 125th birthday of this city, we pay tribute to a special community that embodies the best of Colorado. Its blend of rural and urban life has enhanced this community and the life of its citizens. The past and traditions of this special place on the Western Slope are worth celebrating. It is an honor and a privilege to represent Grand Junction as it commemorates its 125th birthday."

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2007*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, due to other congressional business, I unfortunately missed recorded votes on the House floor on Thursday, June 28, 2007.

I ask that the RECORD reflect that had I been able to vote that day, I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote No. 606 and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 605.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE EVERY STUDENT COUNTS ACT

**HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 10, 2007*

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Every Student Counts Act. In 2001, Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act with broad bipartisan support. The purpose of No Child Left Behind was to ensure that every student in America could receive a quality education, and over the past 6 years, NCLB has helped shed light on many issues facing our education system today.

However, NCLB has not been without flaw. Certain aspects of the law are difficult to implement or are not having the results that we had hoped for. One of the major shortcomings

of NCLB is the law's failure to hold schools accountable for dropouts. Although we believed we addressed this issue in the original NCLB legislation, this portion of the law has not been implemented as we had hoped. Instead, under current law, the only meaningful accountability standard for high schools is students' scores on assessments, not how many students graduate or drop out of school. Unfortunately, this myopic accountability standard has created an incentive for high schools to push out students who are struggling academically, so that their tests scores are not counted in the assessments. Furthermore, the current accountability system also has allowed states to report graduation rates inconsistently and in misleading ways. Finally, NCLB does not require the disaggregation of graduation rates by subgroup, leading to incomplete data on how our schools are doing with all students.

This current high school accountability system is failing both our students and our Nation. Almost one-third of all high school students in the United States fail to graduate with their peers—about 1.2 million every year. In Virginia alone, each year nearly 24,000 students do not graduate with their peers. But the numbers are worse for minorities—only about 50 percent of African American students and 60 percent of Hispanic students graduate on time with a regular diploma, compared to 75 percent of whites.

These numbers only show the tip of the iceberg. Research shows that each dropout, over his or her lifetime, costs the Nation approximately \$260,000. At the current rate, more than 12 million students will drop out over the next decade resulting in a loss to the nation of \$3 trillion. Statistics also show that high school dropouts are more likely to be on public assistance programs—such as welfare—than students who complete high school. If high school dropouts do find employment, they are much more likely to work at unskilled jobs that offer little opportunity for upward mobility or promotions. Indeed, the median earnings of high school dropouts remain between \$20,000 and \$30,000 throughout their lives with little increase as they get older. Unfortunately, there is also a relationship between high school dropouts and prison; one estimate states that approximately two-thirds of all prisoners are high school dropouts. In one study in my home state of Virginia, 75 percent of the inmates serving life sentences were found to have reading achievement levels of 4th grade or worse.

Madam Speaker, the large number of dropouts in America's school system is also troubling in terms of America's position in the global economy. The globalization of the marketplace has altered the way the United States and other countries have to compete for business. With the rapid development of the global marketplace, the United States is no longer the single dominant country in the world economy. And in this economy, one of the major competitive advantages we have in America is our advantage in education. We certainly can't compete with other countries with lower wages when many around the world may work for a few dollars or even pennies a day. Nor can we compete in terms of location. Products can be made anywhere and shipped to customers anywhere else overnight. The technology of today—fax machines, cell phones, blackberries and wireless Internet—allows any